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(Original Signature of Member)

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase the number of peer-to-peer counselors providing counseling for women veterans, and for other purposes.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. COFFMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A BILL**

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase the number of peer-to-peer counselors providing counseling for women veterans, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*  
3       **SECTION 1. PEER-TO-PEER COUNSELING PROGRAM FOR**  
4       **WOMEN VETERANS.**

5       (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1720F(j) of title 38,  
6       United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the  
7       following new paragraph:

1       “(4)(A) As part of the counseling program under this  
2 subsection, the Secretary shall ensure that the program  
3 includes a sufficient number of peer counselors for women  
4 veterans to meet the demand for such counselors. Such  
5 counselors may be employees of the Department and may  
6 have expertise in—

7               “(i) gender-specific issues and services;

8               “(ii) the provision of information about services  
9 and benefits provided under laws administered by  
10 the Secretary; and

11              “(iii) employment mentoring.

12       “(B) In carrying out this paragraph, the Secretary  
13 shall emphasize facilitating peer-to-peer counseling for  
14 women veterans who suffered sexual trauma while serving  
15 in the Armed Forces, have post-traumatic stress disorder  
16 or suffer from another mental health condition, or are oth-  
17 erwise at risk of becoming homeless.

18       “(C) The Secretary shall conduct outreach to inform  
19 women veterans about the program and the assistance  
20 available under the program.

21       “(D)(i) In carrying out this paragraph, the Secretary  
22 shall facilitate engagement and coordination with such  
23 community organizations, State and local governments, in-  
24 stitutions of higher education, chambers of commerce,  
25 local business organizations, organizations that provide

1 legal assistance, and other organizations as the Secretary  
2 considers appropriate to facilitate the transition of women  
3 described in subparagraph (A) into their communities.

4 “(ii) To the degree practicable, the Secretary shall  
5 coordinate facilitation of assistance under this paragraph  
6 with the program carried out under section 1144 of title  
7 10.”.

8 (b) FUNDING.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
9 shall carry out paragraph (4) of section 1720F(j) of title  
10 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), using  
11 funds otherwise made available to the Secretary. No addi-  
12 tional funds are authorized to be appropriated by reason  
13 of such paragraph.